WHAT DO FEDERAL EMPLOYEES SAY?

Federal Human Capital Survey

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is committed to gathering data to assess the state of human capital management across the Federal Government and to provide agency managers with useful information for improving agency management practices. The Federal Human Capital Survey (FHCS), first administered in 2002 and again in 2004, reflects this commitment. The findings from this survey offer a snapshot of Federal employees' perceptions of workforce management conditions and practices in their agencies.

Employee feedback is a key element of planning and measuring improvement in human capital management. Employees invest more talent, energy, knowledge, and enthusiasm in their work when they are managed well and are satisfied with the leadership they receive.

This management report provides 2004 FHCS results for our agency. The findings will help you answer the question, "What can I do to improve my agency's management of its human capital?"

This report:

★ Provides our agency's FHCS results for human capital management systems in three areas—Leadership, Performance Culture, and Talent— that are incorporated in the Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework (HCAAF). This section includes information on our agency results for key drivers of overall job and organizational satisfaction and intent to leave.

★ Presents additional perspectives on our results. You can compare our results on the human capital management systems to identify consistent areas of strength and challenge. These additional "views" include:

- a snapshot of our agency's demographic makeup from OPM's Central Personnel Data File,
- comparisons with private sector results, and

- an appendix that shows our agency results for all items on the survey compared with 2004 governmentwide high, low, and median ratings and applicable 2002 results and available private sector results.

About the 2004 Federal Human Capital Survey

★ **When were Federal employees surveyed?**

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) conducted the Federal Human Capital Survey during the fall of 2004. The survey was administered electronically. Paper versions were provided to employees without Internet access or who preferred a paper questionnaire.

★ **Which Federal employees participated in the survey?**

The survey sample included more than 276,000 employees from 29 major Federal agencies, as well as selected small/independent agencies. The sample was designed to be representative of the Federal workforce. The governmentwide response rate was 54 percent. NASA had 4,766 respondents and a 57 percent response rate.
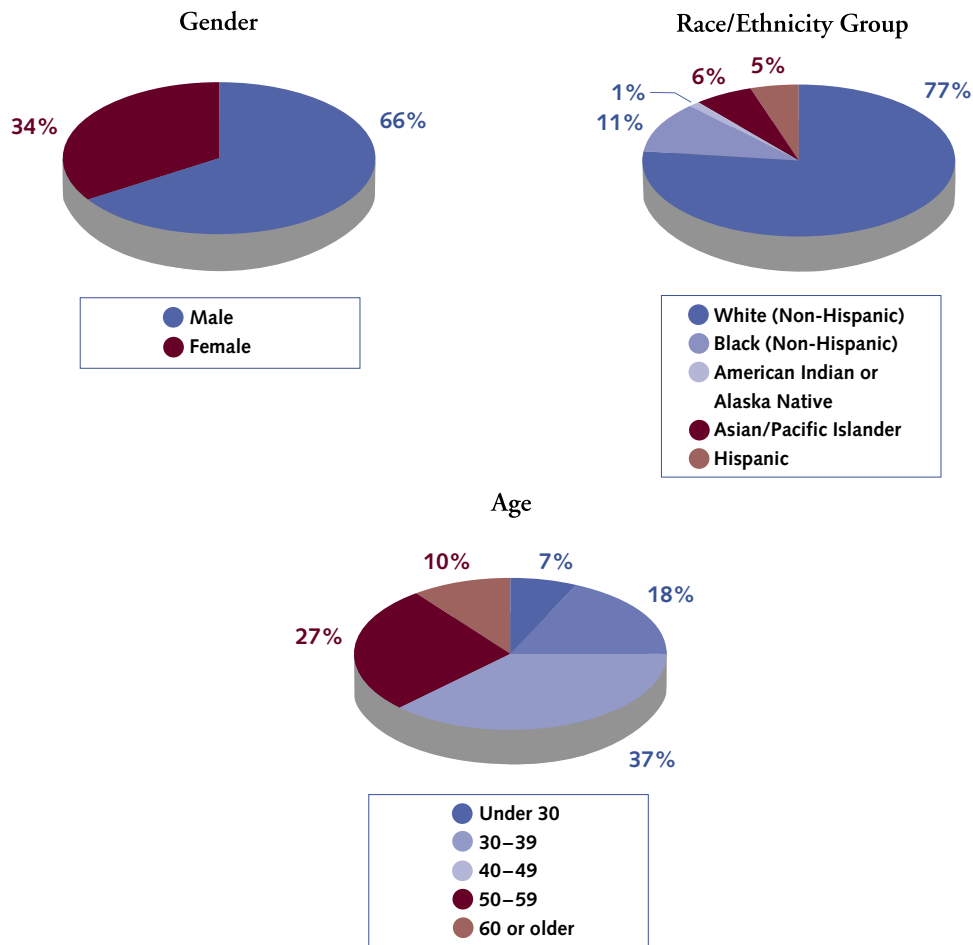
★ **What did the survey measure?**

The 88-item survey measured Federal employees' perceptions about how effectively agencies are managing their workforces. Survey questions addressed three human capital management areas—Leadership; Performance Culture; and Talent (i.e., recruitment, development, and retention). Respondents also were asked about their personal work experiences, their learning (or knowledge management) environment, their job satisfaction, and their satisfaction with benefits, as well as several demographic questions. Employees provided perceptions about their own jobs as well as their work units and agencies.

★ **What do the survey results represent?**

The survey results represent a snapshot in time about the perceptions of the Federal workforce. Statisticians weighted returned survey data to adjust for differences between the makeup of the survey respondents and the population of Federal employees surveyed. Users can be confident the weighted results reflect the agency composition and demographic characteristics of the Federal workforce within plus or minus 1 percentage point.

Snapshot of the NASA Workforce

Individual Characteristics

Gender

- 66% Male
- 34% Female

Legend:
- Male
- Female

Race/Ethnicity Group

- 77%
- 11%
- 1%
- 6%
- 5%

Legend:
- White (Non-Hispanic)
- Black (Non-Hispanic)
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Hispanic

Age

- 7%
- 18%
- 37%
- 27%
- 10%

Legend:
- Under 30
- 30–39
- 40–49
- 50–59
- 60 or older
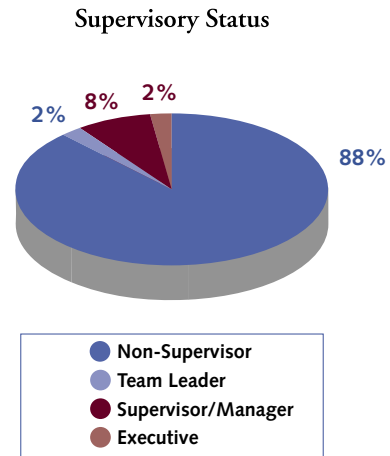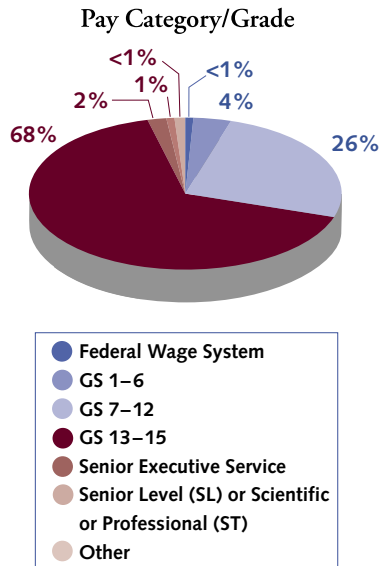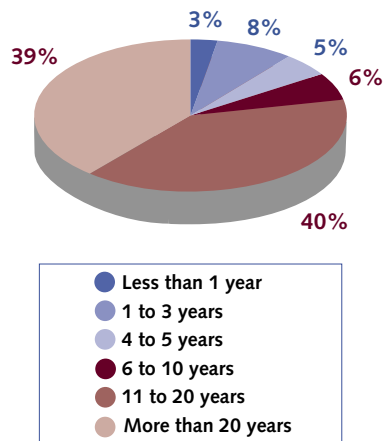
★ Two-thirds of NASA employees are male

★ Slightly less than one-quarter are minorities—Black (non-Hispanic) is the largest minority group (11 percent)

★ Three-quarters of employees are 40 and older

Note: These agency workforce numbers are based on data in OPM's Central Personnel Data File.

Workforce Characteristics

Pay Category/Grade

- Federal Wage System
- GS 1–6
- GS 7–12
- GS 13–15
- Senior Executive Service
- Senior Level (SL) or Scientific or Professional (ST)
- Other

Percentages shown: 68%, 2%, 1%, <1%, <1%, 4%, 26%

Supervisory Status

- Non-Supervisor
- Team Leader
- Supervisor/Manager
- Executive

Percentages shown: 88%, 2%, 8%, 2%

Length of Service with Government

- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 3 years
- 4 to 5 years
- 6 to 10 years
- 11 to 20 years
- More than 20 years

Percentages shown: 3%, 8%, 5%, 6%, 40%, 39%

★ Seven in 10 of NASA employees (68 percent) are GS 13-15

★ Nine in 10 (90 percent) are non-supervisors or team leaders

★ Almost eight in 10 (79 percent) have more than 10 years of experience with the Federal Government

Note: These agency workforce numbers are based on data in OPM's Central Personnel Data File.

PRIVATE SECTOR COMPARISONS

You can compare a subset of our agency's results with results for a group of blue chip private sector organizations. Seventeen items appearing in the 2004 FHCS are comparable with items used by some of Fortune's most admired companies. Positive responses for our agency and the private sector are presented in the tables below. The results are presented in FHCS item number order.

Personal Experiences	NASA % Positive Responses	Private Sector % Positive Responses	NASA Difference (+/–)
1. The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.	91	83	+8
2. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization.	79	62	+17
3. I have enough information to do my job well.	79	72	+7
4. I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.	75	64	+11
5. My job makes good use of my skills and abilities.	74	74	–
6. My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	77	75	+2
7. I like the kind of work I do.	84	82	+2
9. Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by your immediate supervisor/team leader?	75	75	–
10. How would you rate the overall quality of work done by your work group?	89	90	-1
11. How would you rate your organization as a place to work compared to other organizations?	72	57	+15

Note: The percentages shown in the "Private Sector" column provide the percentage who responded positively to the same questions collected from employees performing a range of jobs in a set of large private sector companies, primarily in the U.S.

Two items in this section had slightly different wording on the private sector surveys.
2. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in the company.
11. How would you rate your organization as an organization to work for compared to other organizations?

Job Satisfaction	NASA % Positive Responses	Private Sector % Positive Responses	NASA Difference (+/−)
59. How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?	62	58	+4
60. How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what's going on in your organization?	55	59	-4
61. How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job?	63	56	+7
63. How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job in your organization?	45	43	+2
64. How satisfied are you with the training you receive for your present job?	68	67	+1
65. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?	73	71	+2
67. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your organization?	65	66	-1

Note: The percentages shown in the "Private Sector" column provide the percentage who responded favorably to the same questions collected from employees performing a range of jobs in a set of large private sector companies, primarily in the U.S.

Two items in this section had slightly different wording on the private sector surveys.
60. How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what's going on in the company?
67. Considering everything, how would you rate your overall satisfaction with the organization at the present time?

APPENDIX

The tables in this Appendix allow you to compare our positive scores on items
in the 2004 Federal Human Capital Survey with the following benchmark scores:

- Our agency's 2002 positive scores.

- The highest, lowest, and median positive scores (benchmarks) from among
  the results of other Federal agencies and the combined results for the small/
  independent agencies. These three scores are presented to help you assess our
  agency's rating on an item.

- Corresponding private sector positive scores, where available.

Personal Work Experiences						
Section Item	**2004 NASA % Positive**	**2002 NASA % Positive**	**2004 FHCS Benchmarks % Positive**			**2004 Private Sector % Positive**
			High	**Median**	**Low**	
1. The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.	91	87	95	85	80	83
2. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization.	79	73	79	64	46	62
3. I have enough information to do my job well.	79	80	79	74	63	72
4. I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.	75	72	78	61	41	64
5. My job makes good use of my skills and abilities.	74	72	85	68	50	74
6. My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	77	77	80	72	60	75
7. I like the kind of work I do.	84	84	88	82	75	82
8. I recommend my organization as a good place to work.	73	74	81	64	41	–
9. Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by your immediate supervisor/team leader?	75	72	75	67	56	75
10. How would you rate the overall quality of work done by your work group?	89	86	93	84	77	90
11. How would you rate your organization as a place to work compared to other organizations?	72	69	79	57	35	57

Note: The percentages shown in the "Private Sector" column provide the percentage who responded favorably to the same questions collected from employees performing a range of jobs in a set of large private sector companies, primarily in the U.S.

Two items in this section had slightly different wording on the private sector surveys.
2. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in the company.
11. How would you rate your organization as an organization to work for compared to other organizations?

Section Item	2004 NASA % Positive	2002 NASA % Positive	2004 FHCS Benchmarks % Positive			2004 Private Sector % Positive
Recruitment, Development, and Retention						
			High	Median	Low	
12. The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.	81	78	90	74	61	–
13. My supervisor supports my need to balance work and family issues.	88	85	88	80	65	–
14. Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit provide employees with the opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills.	73	70	73	60	48	–
15. My work unit is able to recruit people with the right skills.	48	41	81	47	23	–
16. The skill level in my work unit has improved in the past year.	49	58	59	50	40	–
17. I have sufficient resources (for example, people, materials, budget) to get my job done.	49	54	65	51	30	–
18. My workload is reasonable.	65	72	66	59	44	–
19. My talents are used well in the workplace.	67	69	76	63	48	–
20. I know how my work relates to the agency's goals and priorities.	82	90	89	83	75	–
21. The work I do is important.	87	89	95	89	84	–
22. Physical conditions (for example, noise level, temperature, lighting, cleanliness in the workplace) allow employees to perform their jobs well.	78	75	85	68	52	–

Performance Culture						
Section Item	**2004 NASA % Positive**	**2002 NASA % Positive**	**2004 FHCS Benchmarks % Positive**			**2004 Private Sector % Positive**
			High	**Median**	**Low**	
23. Promotions in my work unit are based on merit.	46	46	54	37	22	–
24. In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	26	25	34	28	20	–
25. Products and services in my work unit are improved based on customer/public input.	61	71	63	47	29	–
26. Employees have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to work processes.	58	56	60	41	28	–
27. High-performing employees in my work unit are recognized or rewarded on a timely basis.	59	54	62	45	27	–
28. Employees are rewarded for providing high quality products and services to customers.	61	61	60	45	24	–
29. Creativity and innovation are rewarded.	57	57	63	37	21	–
30. Awards in my work unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.	56	60	63	43	31	–
31. In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.	38	NA	41	31	21	–
32. In my work unit, personnel decisions are based on merit.	43	NA	56	34	20	–
33. My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	78	75	78	67	56	–
34. Discussions with my supervisor/team leader about my performance are worthwhile.	68	67	68	58	49	–
35. I am held accountable for achieving results.	83	81	85	81	69	–
36. Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit are committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society.	66	66	66	55	47	–
37. Policies and programs promote diversity in the workplace (for example, recruiting minorities and women, training in awareness of diversity issues, mentoring).	73	75	73	58	46	–
38. Managers/supervisors/team leaders work well with employees of different backgrounds.	78	76	78	64	56	–

	Leadership					
Section Item	2004 NASA % Positive	2002 NASA % Positive	2004 FHCS Benchmarks % Positive			2004 Private Sector % Positive
			High	Median	Low	
39. I have a high level of respect for my organization's senior leaders.	57	NA	68	47	33	–
40. In my organization, leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.	46	47	51	35	27	–
41. My organization's leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.	61	64	65	48	34	–
42. Managers communicate the goals and priorities of the organization.	64	NA	75	62	49	–
43. Managers review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.	60	74	73	60	40	–
44. Employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job.	91	NA	91	74	48	–
45. My organization has prepared employees for potential security threats.	76	NA	88	73	60	–
46. Complaints, disputes or grievances are resolved fairly in my work unit.	47	53	47	37	29	–
47. Arbitrary action, personal favoritism and coercion for partisan political purposes are not tolerated.	60	56	60	48	33	–
48. Prohibited Personnel Practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/ applicant, obstructing a person's right to compete for employment, knowingly violating veterans' preference requirements) are not tolerated.	72	NA	72	61	49	–
49. I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.	63	65	63	47	38	–

Learning (Knowledge Management)						
Section Item	2004 NASA % Positive	2002 NASA % Positive	2004 FHCS Benchmarks % Positive			2004 Private Sector % Positive
			High	Median	Low	
50. Supervisors/team leaders provide employees with constructive suggestions to improve their job performance.	66	NA	66	59	51	–
51. Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit support employee development.	80	72	80	66	52	–
52. Employees have electronic access to learning and training programs readily available at their desk.	84	81	92	73	29	–
53. My training needs are assessed.	61	59	61	46	31	–
54. I receive the training I need to perform my job.	73	75	73	59	38	–
55. Managers promote communication among different work units (for example, about projects, goals, needed resources).	65	63	65	52	37	–
56. Employees in my work unit share job knowledge with each other.	79	78	85	75	68	–
57. Employees use information technology (for example, intranet, shared networks) to perform work.	94	NA	95	89	69	–
58. Employees use information technology (for example, intranet, shared networks) to gather and share knowledge.	90	NA	90	84	67	–

Job Satisfaction						
Section Item	**2004 NASA % Positive**	**2002 NASA % Positive**	**2004 FHCS Benchmarks % Positive**			**2004 Private Sector % Positive**
			High	**Median**	**Low**	
59. How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?	62	65	64	52	36	58
60. How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what's going on in your organization?	55	58	56	47	33	59
61. How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job?	63	59	64	50	36	56
62. How satisfied are you with the policies and practices of your senior leaders?	46	NA	49	39	28	–
63. How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job in your organization?	45	42	45	35	24	43
64. How satisfied are you with the training you receive for your present job?	68	67	68	55	34	67
65. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?	73	76	77	68	56	71
66. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay?	71	71	72	65	52	–
67. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your organization?	65	66	74	58	40	66

Note: The percentages shown in the "Private Sector" column provide the percentage who responded favorably to the same questions collected from employees performing a range of jobs in a set of large private sector companies, primarily in the U.S.

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60. How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what's going on in the company?
67. Considering everything, how would you rate your overall satisfaction with the organization at the present time?

Section Item	2004 NASA % Positive	2002 NASA % Positive	2004 FHCS Benchmarks % Positive			2004 Private Sector % Positive
Satisfaction with Benefits						
			High	Median	Low	
68. How satisfied are you with retirement benefits?	75	75	79	69	60	–
69. How satisfied are you with health insurance benefits?	66	55	70	60	49	–
70. How satisfied are you with life insurance benefits?	66	60	72	62	54	–
71. How satisfied are you with long term care insurance benefits?	37	24	40	34	26	–
72. How satisfied are you with the flexible spending account (FSA) program?	37	NA	46	33	24	–
73. How satisfied are you with paid vacation time?	93	93	93	88	80	–
74. How satisfied are you with paid leave for illness (for example, personal), including family care situations (for example, childbirth/adoption or elder care)?	90	NA	91	86	75	–
75. How satisfied are you with child care subsidies?	16	11	20	14	10	–
76. How satisfied are you with work/life programs (for example, health and wellness, employee assistance, elder care, and support groups)?	51	NA	51	36	24	–
77. How satisfied are you with telework/ telecommuting?	32	29	43	30	12	–
78. How satisfied are you with alternative work schedules?	71	75	79	62	15	–